Annual Report for 1937

on the

Health and Sanitary Conditions of the BOROUGH OF WAREHAM.

Medical Officer :
A. M. CUNNINGHAM, M.A., M.B.

Sanitary Inspector :
Mr. JAMES BRIDLE.

Wareham,
June, 1938.

To the Wareham Borough Council.

Gentlemen,

I herewith present my Annual Report for the year ending Dec. 31st, 1937.

The Ministry of Health are particularly desirous that the report should not contain matter that has already been included in a previous report and that, except in special instances, it should refer to alterations and improvements that have been effected.

The small size of the Borough of Wareham naturally makes a record of such alterations a short one.

Section A.—Statistics and Social Conditions of the Area.

Below will be found the Statistics for the Area. The Social conditions remain as before.

Area.—710 acres.

Population.—The Registrar-General's estimate of resident population, 1937, is 2,476. The number of inhabited houses is 724

Rateable Value.—The rateable value is £13,245 and the sum represented by a penny rate is £50 15s. 0d.

Vital Statistics.—

		Total	M	F	
Live Births :	Legitimate	29	10	19	
	Illegitimate	5	4	1	
	Birth rate per 1000 estimated population ...				13.7
Still Births :	Legitimate	1	0	1	
	Rate per 1000 (live and still) births) ...				.40
Deaths :	...	34	18	16	
	Death Rate per 1,000 estimated population				13.7
Deaths from Puerperal Sepsis					Nil
,, ,, other Puerperal Causes					1
	Rate per 1000 (live and still births				28.6

Death Rate of Infants under 1 year :

All Infants per 1,000 live births	88.
Legitimate Infants per 1,000 legitimate live births ...	69.
Illegitimate Infants per 1,000 illegitimate live births ...	200.

Deaths from Cancer	(all ages)	6
,, ,, Measles	,,	0
,, ,, Whooping Cough	,,	1
,, ,, Diarrhœa	(under 2)	0

Section B.—General Provision of Health Services for the Area.

Ambulances.—Wareham still possesses no Ambulance, but the occasions on which it is required strictly in the Borough are very limited. Outside the Borough the most frequent need is to deal with road casualties, but though on rare occasions a rather long wait is sometimes encountered, this is the exception rather than the rule. Usually, by the time the doctor has given first aid treatment, an ambulance from Poole or Bournemouth is ready to transport the injured.

Here I must pay tribute to the very efficient services run by these towns.

I have come to think that the initial expense and upkeep of an ambulance stationed at Wareham would hardly be justified by the number of times it would be used.

Of the other Services—Laboratory Facilities, Nursing in the Home, Treatment Centres and Clinics, and Hospital Facilities remain as before.

An account of a new Immunisation Clinic appears under the Infectious Disease Section.

Section C.—Sanitary Circumstances of the Area.

I. (a) Water.—The supply has been satisfactory in quantity and in quality during the year. No regular chemical or bacteriological examinations were carried out during the year, but with the example of outbreaks of Enteric fever recently before the public, such examinations will be regularly made in 1938.

(b) Sewerage.—The plans for the extension of the Sewerage system to the Sandford and Worgret Road areas have been drawn up and at the time of writing they have been approved and the work is in the hands of the engineers..

The new work will consist of a new sewer running the length of Worgret Road and connecting with the existing system, Sandford Road will be drained by a sewer that will be emptied by a pumping station at Northport and will discharge into the main not far from the disposal beds.

II. Rivers and Streams. – No action has been taken or has been necessary to check pollution of the two rivers.

III. (a) Closet Accommodation.—There are now 21 houses in the old part of the Borough which are not connected to the sewer. During the year 3 houses were connected.

(b) Public Cleansing.—The system remains the same and is satisfactory.

(c) Sanitary Inspections.—The Inspector reports that he has made 66 inspections during the year. 29 informal notices were served ; 28 were complied with. No Statutory notices were served.

(d) Shops.—Under the Shops Acts various informal notices were served for failure to close at the appointed hour. In some cases these were disregarded and 15 summonses were issued. Fines were imposed in 4 cases.

(e) Smoke Abatement.—No complaints arise in Wareham on this point as there are no factories.

(f) Swimming Baths and Pools.—There are none in this area.

(g) Eradication of Bed Bugs.—No work of this nature has, fortunately, had to be undertaken in Wareham.

IV. Schools.—The condition of the Junior School is still not satisfactory with regard to sanitation as it is not connected with the sewer. The system of ventilation and lighting of the class-rooms is out of date. Unfortunately this cannot be remedied and the building of a new school on the north side of Worgret Road is awaited.

The condition of the Senior School is satisfactory. Neither school has been closed for infectious disease.

Section D.—Housing.

I. Inspection of Dwelling Houses during the year.

1. (a). Total number of dwelling houses inspected for housing defects, 36.

(b). Number of inspections made for the purpose, 60.

2. (a). Number of Dwelling Houses (included under sub-head (1) above) which were inspected and recorded under the Housing Consolidated Regulations, 1925, 32.

(b). Number of inspections made for the purpose, 40.

3. Number of dwelling houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation, 17.

4. Number of dwelling houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation, 6.

II. Remedy of Defects during the year without service of formal notice.

Number of defective dwelling houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their officers, 6.

III. Action under Statutory Powers during the year.

(a). Proceedings under sections 9, 10 and 16 of the Housing Act of 1936:

1. Number of dwelling houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs, 0.

2. Number of dwelling houses which were rendered fit after service of formal notice:

(a). By Owners, 0.

(b). By Local Authority in default of Owners, 0.

(b). Proceedings under Public Health Acts:

1. Number of dwelling houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied, 3.

2. Number of dwelling houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices:

(a). By Owners, 3.

(b). By Local Authority in default of Owners, 0.

(c). Proceedings under sections 11 and 13 of the Housing Act of 1936:

1. Number of dwelling houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made, Nil.

2. Number of dwelling houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders, Nil.

(d). Proceedings under Section 12 of the Housing Act of 1936:

1. Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were made, Nil.

2. Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the tenement or room having been rendered fit, Nil.

The Council did not erect any new houses during the year.

Other Persons erected 14.

The Local Authority own 82 houses.

There are 438 working class houses in the district.

Section E.—Inspection and Supervision of Foods.

(a) Milk.—There are only three Dairy Farms inside the Borough. They have all been inspected. Two are satisfactory, and one is not in all respects satisfactory. Informal notices with regard to it have been served.

The examination of samples of milk for bacterial content and for tubercle bacilli is not carried out under this Authority.

(b) Meat and Other Foods.—The Slaughter Houses and Butchers' Shops in the Borough have been inspected and found satisfactory.

There are only two slaughter houses which are much used as most meat comes into the town already killed. In the ones used pigs are mostly killed. No details of the number of animals killed are available.

The meat offered for sale has been in good condition and free from disease.

(c) Adulteration of Food, etc.—The administration of Acts dealing with these matters is not carried out by this Authority.

(d) The same applies to the Chemical and Bacteriological examination of food.

(e) Nutrition.—No special steps to increase the knowledge of the public on the subject of nutrition—especially with regard to children—have been taken, as there must be few cases of malnutrition in Wareham.

The work of the Child Welfare clinic does a lot to inform mothers as to the right feeding of infants and young children.

Section F.—Prevalence of, and control over, Infectious Diseases.

There have been few cases of infectious disease during the past year.

There was one case of Diphtheria, aged 5.

There were two cases of Erysipelas.

There were five cases of Pneumonia.

Clinics.—During the year a new Clinic was started with a view to immunizing children against Diphtheria.

Only very small infants from 1—2 years old have been immunised, the idea being to present the advantages of immunisation to the mothers of children born the year previously, through the medium of the district nurses, the Child Welfare Clinic, and the Health Visitor.

It is hoped that if this is systematically carried out a large protected infant population will exist in the course of 5 or 6 years.

No tests have been carried out to see if the children are susceptable to diphtheria before innoculation; it is assumed that they are.

Each child receives one innoculation of Alum Precipitated Toxoid. There have been no unpleasant reactions or after results from the use of this substance.

After three months the children are tested (Schick) for immunity.

During the year 31 children were innoculated. 25 were found to be immunised. One was not immunised. Five have not yet been tested.

The average age of the children was two years.

Cancer.—There were six deaths from Cancer out of a total of 34 deaths from all causes. This is rather a high percentage, but it must always be borne in mind that there are always cases of incurable cancer being nursed at the Public Assistance Institution and that these frequently come in to the Institution from the country round.

TUBERCULOSIS.—The following form indicates the case incidence and deaths from this disease. There are 11 cases on the register.

Age Periods.	New Cases.				Deaths.			
	Respiratory.		Non-Respiratory.		Respiratory.		Non-Respiratory.	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
0-1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1-5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
5-15	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
15-25	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
25-35	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
35-45	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
45-55	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
55-65	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
65 and up	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Totals	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0

During 1938 the office of Medical Officer of Health will be taken over by Dr. Mawson, who is also to be Medical Officer to Swanage and the Wareham and Purbeck Rural District Council. This can only be a change for the better.

From the Medical Officer's point of view the often clashing interests of private practice and public health are kept apart.

From the Town's point of view you now have the services of a specialist in Public Health, and although Wareham's health problems are primarily her own interests, in many instances they are the same problems as those of the neighbouring authorities.

One Medical Officer will doubtless help towards the pooling of interests and improvement of administration.

Thanking the Council for the kind way they have always received any reports I have had to make

I am, Sirs,

Your obedient Servant,

A. M. CUNNINGHAM.